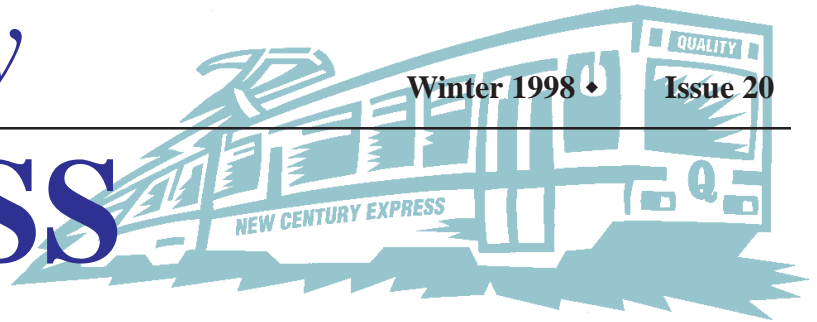


# New Century EXPRESS

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DEDICATED TO QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN CALIFORNIA STATE GOVERNMENT

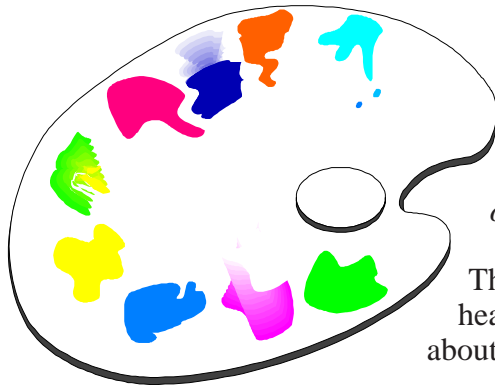
## The Art of Recognition

This issue of the New Century Express focuses on excerpts from the "Art of Recognition," a comprehensive resource guide for designing recognition strategies in the organization. - see page 12 for instructions on accessing a complete copy of the guide.

### Recognition—What Is It? What Can It Be?

The common dictionary definition of recognition is as follows:

- ⇒ The act of recognizing or condition of being recognized.
- ⇒ Attention or favorable notice.



Traditionally, we recognize good service, quality of work, etc., in an effort to reinforce desired behavior. The strength of recognition lies in the fact that it is a process that reinforces and appreciates these behaviors. Some believe that recognition is not in itself a change driver. For a discussion of these differing views, see *New Perspectives on Recognition* on page 2.

The *Art of Recognition* challenges the reader to consider alternatives to heavily structured, top-down, and irregular recognition processes. Think about it...do your recognition practices really work?

If we've caught your attention, keep reading! We offer enterprising ideas and imaginative activities to celebrate achievements, foster improvement and learning, and increase your organization's energy. ❁

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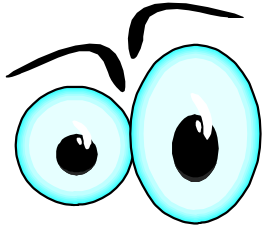
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## New Perspectives on Recognition



Authors such as Alfie Kohn, Frederick Herzberg, and Peter Block have raised awareness that our conventional thinking about reward and recognition may be flawed. They challenge us to rethink the concept that employees are motivated by rewards, especially financial rewards. Some of the controversial ideas include:

- ✗ Pay isn't a motivator.
- ✗ Rewards punish.
- ✗ Rewards rupture relationships.
- ✗ Rewards ignore reasons.
- ✗ Rewards reduce risk-taking.
- ✗ Rewards undermine intrinsic motivation.

Alfie Kohn argues that the “carrot and stick” approach is counterproductive and that the “do this and you’ll get that” thinking needs serious reexamination. Rewards, in particular monetary rewards, foster competition and can destroy teamwork.

Frederick Herzberg said “Managers do not motivate employees by giving them higher wages, more benefits, or new status symbols. Rather, employees are motivated by their own inherent need to succeed at a challenging task. The manager’s job, then, is not to motivate people to get them to achieve; instead, the manager should provide opportunities for people to achieve so they will become motivated.” (*Workers' Needs: The Same Around the World* 1987)

Peter Block explains that “Many organizations are putting a lot of effort into giving more recognition for good ideas and good quality and service. Companies have team competitions for quality improvement. Many have awards for meeting quality criteria fashioned after the Malcolm Baldrige Award. These are fine things to do. Praise for doing things right is a welcome relief...Keep the recognition systems but don’t act as if they will bring the changes we seek. Feedback and rewards have a place in how we govern, but their place is not to drive and define change.” (*Stewardship*, 1993)

### On the Other Hand...



There are several publications on the market that document positive, results-based models for recognition. (See Bibliography)

“*Getting Employees To Fall In Love With Your Company*” cites best practices from leading companies all over the world on how to create a high-energy workplace. This book presents five key principles that “can inspire the bottom-line results-focused commitment of all employees.” (Harris, 1996) They are:

- ⇒ Capture the hearts & minds of all your employees.
- ⇒ Open communication between all levels of your organization.

-continued on page 3

## On the Other Hand... (continued from page 2)



- ⇒ Create partnerships between all employees built upon trust, equality, and sharing.
- ⇒ Drive learning into every nook & cranny of your company.
- ⇒ Emancipate the action of every employee.

“*1001 Ways to Reward Employees*” includes examples of recognition practices from numerous organizations and cites results of a survey by the Council of Communication Management — that recognition for a job well done is the top motivator of employee performance. The book focuses on:

- ? manager-initiated performance-based rewards
- ? awards used to obtain specific results in productivity, customer service, sales
- ? company-initiated programs most commonly used to maintain motivation throughout the organization.

“*I Saw What You Did & I Know Who You Are — Bloopers, Blunders and Success Stories or Giving and Receiving Recognition*” shares 18 years of experience in discovering effective ways to give positive recognition to people in the workplace. Chapter titles include:  
Giving Quality Recognition, Why Isn’t This Stuff Working, When People Don’t Take Your Recognition, Receiving Recognition Gracefully, and Putting It All Together.

## Formal State Programs

Current State civil service recognition programs are predominantly traditional and formal. These include:

Sustained Superior Accomplishment Award recognizes an individual for superior job performance over a 24-month period.

Superior Accomplishment Awards fall into two categories—silver and gold awards—and recognize an individual or team of employees whose work contributes to improving California State Government.

Supervisory Performance Award Program recognizes supervisors who have exceeded the standard of performance and have contributed to State government.

Merit Award Program monetarily rewards employees who submit ideas that reduce or eliminate State expenditures, improve safety, or improve State operations.

Pay For Performance ties work performance with compensation for exempt, managerial, and supervisory employees.

In addition to these formal programs, many State agencies have recognized the need to develop other, less formalized ways to honor employees. See “Cool Ways to Recognize Employees” on page 6 for examples.

## General Recognition Principles

Any practice is more effective when it is organized, systematic, and applied consistently throughout the organization. Recognition is best integrated into the vital concerns of the organization and considered in the planning efforts for all major organizational objective. Whether you're initiating or improving your recognition efforts, keep the following points in mind:

- ⇒ Encourage employee involvement in the design and content of recognition programs. In this way, recognition becomes customized and personalized.
- ⇒ The more immediate the recognition, the greater the impact.
- ⇒ Recognition is not compensation.
- ⇒ Recognition should be based on outcomes and efforts.
- ⇒ Employees should perceive that recognition is based on merit, not luck.
- ⇒ There are no winners or losers in your recognition systems.
- ⇒ Recognition programs need to be continuously improved and updated regularly.

### **It Goes Without Saying...Yet We're Going To Say It Anyway!**

Your recognition efforts must be:

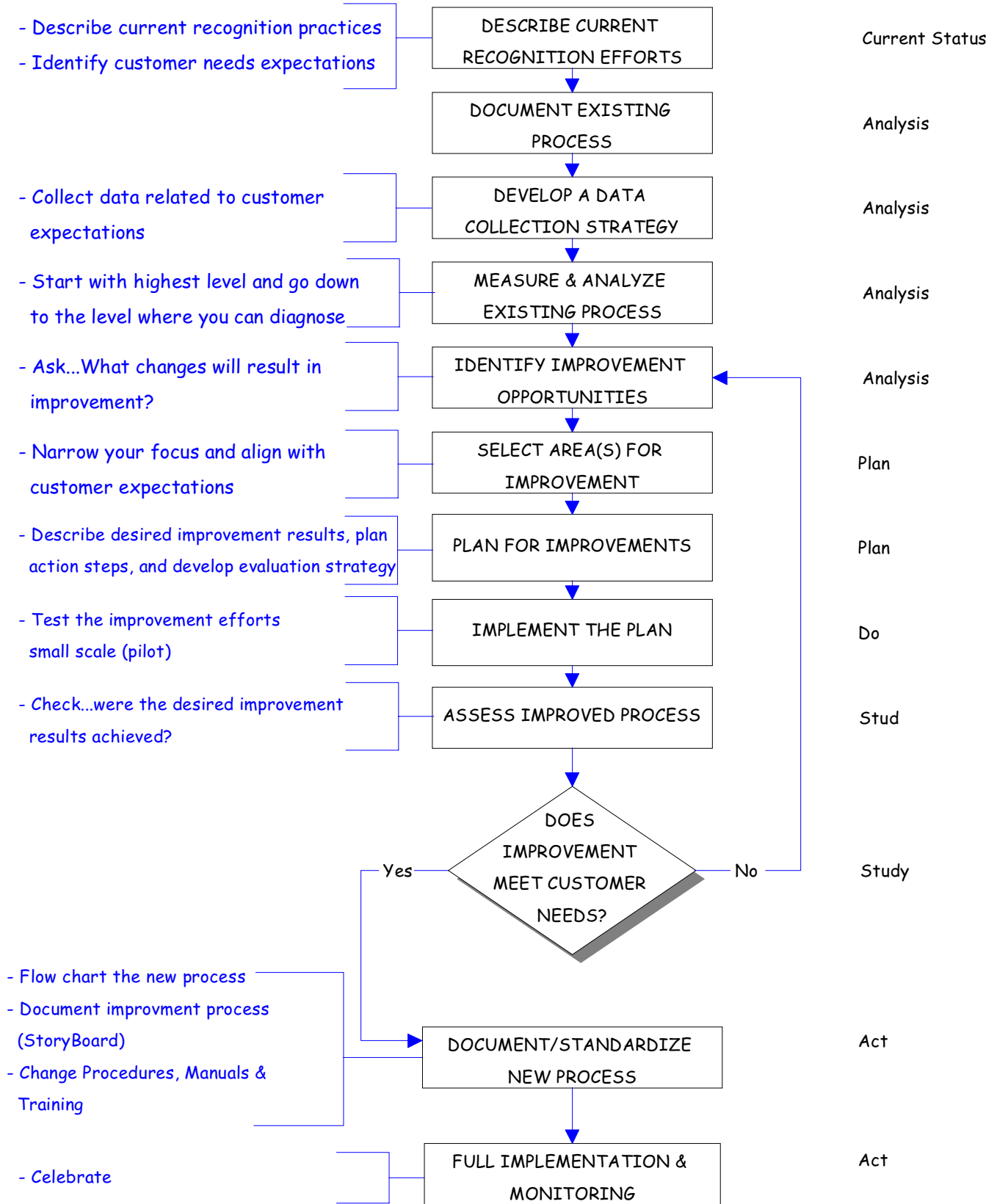
- ⇒ Compatible with your organization's culture.
- ⇒ Aligned with your organization's goals and objectives.
- ⇒ Integrated into the fabric of the organization.
- ⇒ Continuously evaluated and improved.

"The more people  
you involve,  
the better it works!"

*The Art of  
Recognition* Editors

# Recognition Program Roadmap

As a model for continuous improvement, "Plan-Do-Study-Act" (P-D-S-A) can be applied to the recognition process. Note the application of PDSA in the right-hand column of this roadmap.



**Here are some examples of ways to increase learning, recognize achievements, communicate successes, articulate values, and increase energy!**




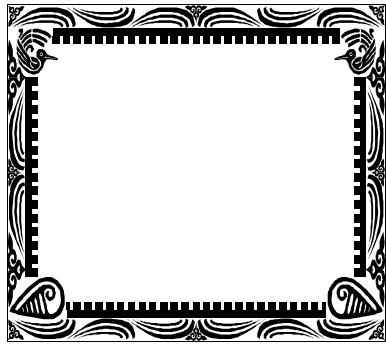

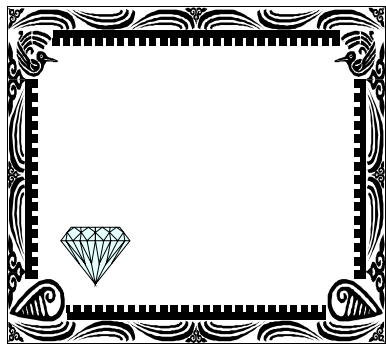


- ⇒ Use your tools...For example, a Chart Printer is a piece of equipment familiar to trainers and people who present before large groups. The Chart Printer enlarges test, graphics and even photographs to poster size. Imagine walking into your office and seeing a large poster which say "We did it, and it couldn't have happened without your help!"
- ⇒ If you celebrate with food, think about its presentation! You'll be surprised what can happen. (Personalized cakes and cookies and hors d'oeuvres arranged in the message "thank you" demonstrates thoughtfulness and attention to detail.)
- ⇒ Switch roles! Have managers and supervisors volunteer their time to perform support staff functions. For example, clerical staff drew names of managers and supervisors who volunteered 30-60 minutes of their time handling their staff's responsibilities. This exchange emphasized that everyone's job is valuable and provided great opportunities for all staff to forge connections.
- ⇒ Get creative! Combine fun, learning and celebration all in one event. For example, the managers of an organization wanted to celebrate a significant accomplishment. With an element of surprise, they proclaimed that the morning would be devoted to celebration and challenged the staff to find the celebration site. Following special messages and E-mail clues planted by the managers, staff found the location where they were treated to breakfast. While the event lasted only a couple of hours, it continues to be remembered.
- ⇒ Find the talent in your office (singers, musicians, etc.). Select some music and create your own lyrics that have meaning to the person or event you are celebrating.
- ⇒ Break traditions! Don't be constrained by arbitrary dates. For example, an employee who had worked for one agency for 24 years was transferring to another agency location. His co-workers decided to celebrate his 25-year service milestone one year early to be a part of the celebration.
- ⇒ Start each meeting with a "Good News" Introduction -- have people tell who they are and state what wonderful thing they've recently attempted or accomplished.
- ⇒ Set aside "Share Days" for teams to share their success stories. Provide time and materials to create story boards or displays that show the life cycle of each project. Goals, processes, setbacks, successes, and celebrations should be included in the display.
- ⇒ Include "Did You Know" Stories in employee newsletters. Highlight "Did You Know" and "Good News" stories in regular editions of the organization's newsletter.

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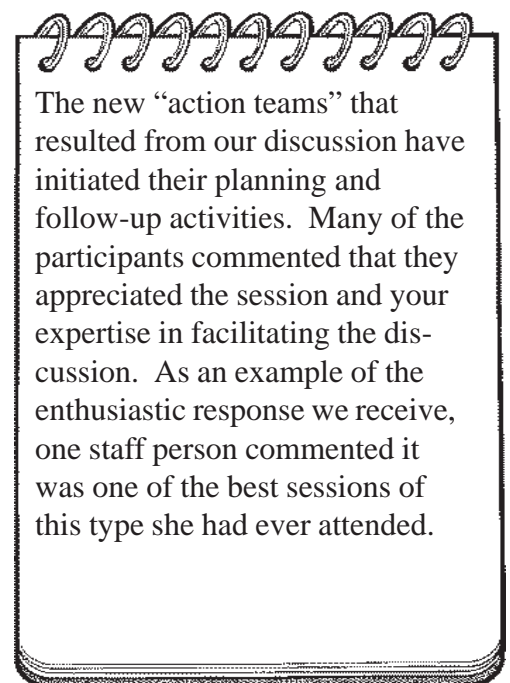
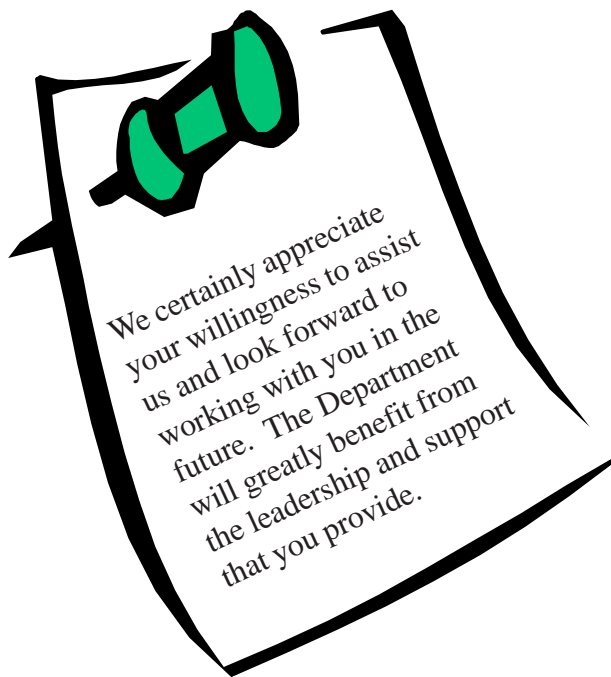
## Tips For Customizing Recognition Certificates

Part of the fun in recognizing achievements and efforts is customizing your acknowledgment to tap into the heart, mind and soul of the recipient. Traditional certificates tend to be formal, generic and impersonal. By creating your own certificates, you can customize the recognition to create a visual association to the specific outcome achieved and include language which reinforces the values and beliefs of the organization. Highly creative and unique certificates have a way of being displayed and shared with staff. Many word processing packages include templates for creating certificates. Customizing certificates is as easy as 1-2-3.

	<p><b>Step 1: Begin with a Border</b> A variety of software packages offer predefined border styles, or allow you to create a custom border. If you are in a hurry, want to use a theme, or seek a more formal look, office supply stores sell paper with colorful, elaborate preprinted borders that can enhance any certificate.</p>	
	<p><b>Step 2: Add a Picture or Logo</b> Graphics help visually represent the “essence” of the tribute. Graphics software packages are readily available in stores. Most software packages make it easy to import art images, logos, or drawings into your document. Build your graphics library, scan in a team picture, or create an original piece of art work.</p>	
	<p><b>Step 3: Add a Message</b> Keep the message brief, yet make sure to state what specifically is being acknowledged. Use a variety of fonts to accent your message. “Fun” fonts (like Jester) help spice up the certificate. “Traditional” fonts (like Diploma) convey a more formal tone. Use font sizes and types that can easily be read from afar.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Dedicated Diamond presented to <b>Kimberly Levick</b> In recognition of Customer Service Excellence for exceeding customer expectations. Thank you from Satisfied Customers</p>

Other helpful tips: Print certificates on quality paper (use **colors** or high quality textures), select a memorable frame, enlarge the certificate on a ChartPrinter and post in the employee’s office, and have team members sign and present the certificate. Most of all, remember to ask the recipient to share his/her journey that resulted in the tribute. It is this type of conversation that fosters learning. ❁

# Recognition Letters





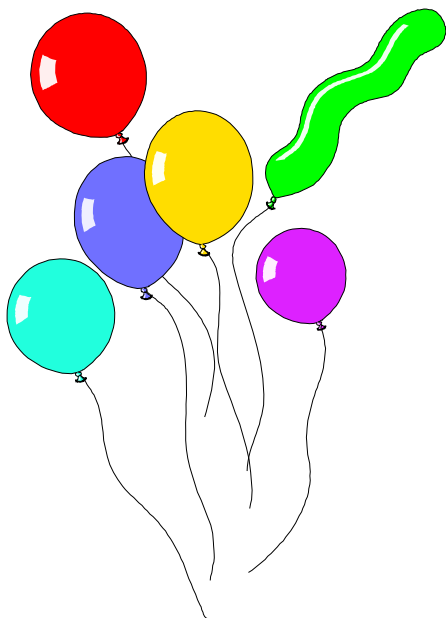
# Recognition Letters

**Jim --**

***GREAT JOB!***

You kept the interviews going smoothly. I particularly appreciated the way you brought candidates to the interview room right on time and introduced them in a professional manner. I also appreciated the fact that you kept the room tidy with fresh water available...and the schedules, names, and applications in the right order, every time. Thanks!!

**Kathleen**



## **Way to go Team!**

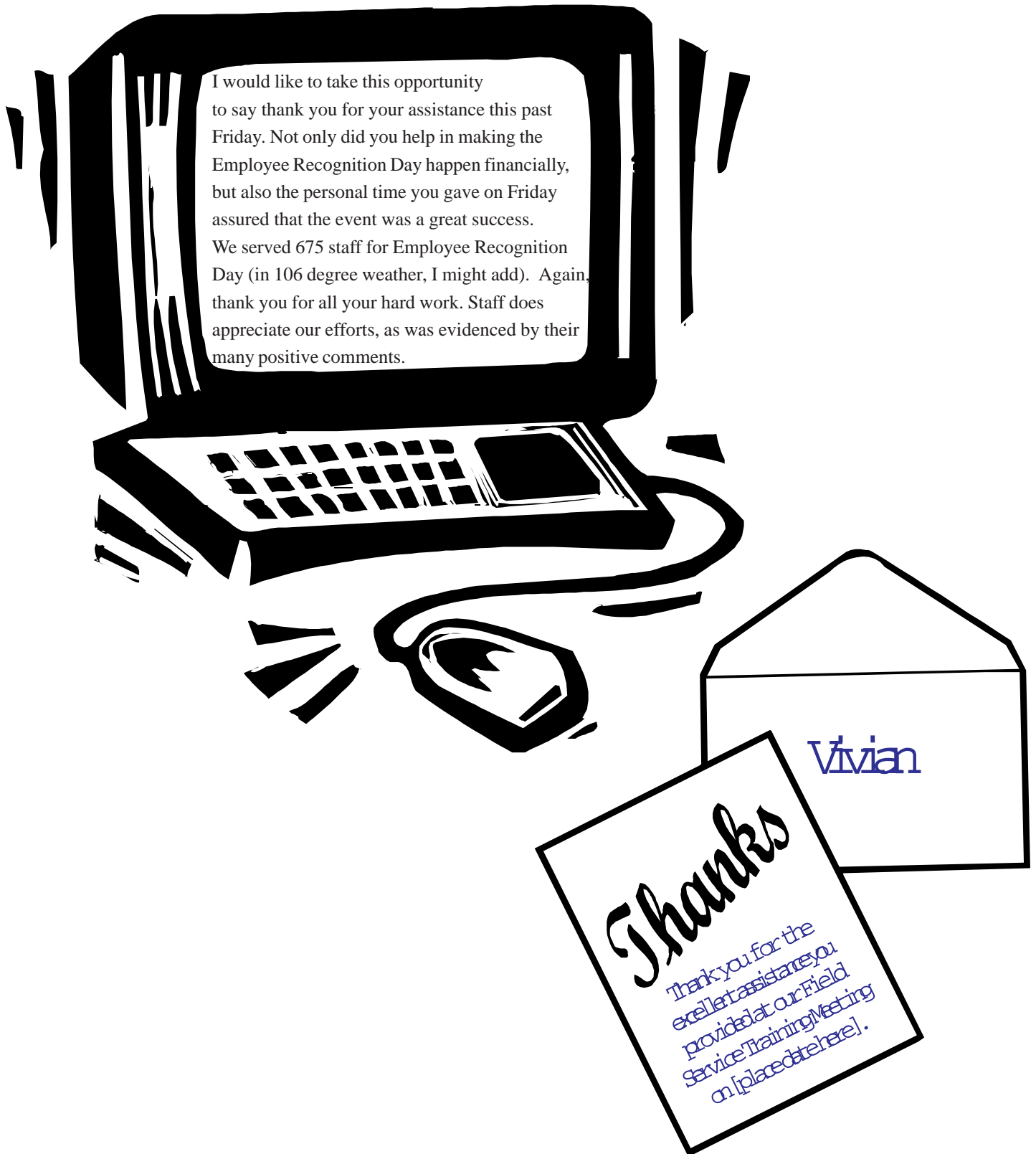
Please accept my sincerest admiration for a job well done. Over the years, we have seen many teams or task forces grapple with the issues surrounding space and moves and you have achieved exceptional success. You virtually met everyone's needs in record time, and without arousing feelings of disadvantage or territorial protectiveness. Your presentation to Executive Staff was extremely well conceived and executed and the touches of humor made it charming as well.

One of the hallmarks of a successful team is its ability to work together toward a common goal, without regard for rank or status. Your team represented all branches of the department and all levels of the hierarchy. I understand from several of the team members that a strong feeling of equality and sense of purpose characterized the work of the team. As a team, you're an excellent example of how far [employee's name placed here] has come in making teamwork the way we do business.

## **Congratulations!**

[organization or department name here]

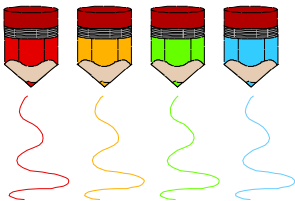
# Recognition Letters





- ⇒ Create Artifacts; Handmade mementos, pictures, and team slogans remind us of successes long after the project has ended.
- ⇒ Create Ceremonies: Film makers and theater casts complete their work with "wrap" parties and then "strike the set." This can be a good model for ending a project and putting away the work.
- ⇒ Find New Language: Name your projects and people's roles in them.
- ⇒ Product/Project Launch: Celebrate the beginning of a project.
- ⇒ Customer Recognition: Post copies of "raving fans" (fan mail, thank you's and commendations) from your customers, internal & external.
- ⇒ Use the full range of items--plaques, certificates, commendations, food, etc.--for recognition. Remember customization is the key.
- ⇒ Thank you's: Simple, direct, meaningful thank you's are still potent ways of honoring achievement. Use them liberally! ⚙

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The complete resource guide can be obtained on the Internet at:

<http://www.strs.ca.gov/publish/printed/artofrec1297.pdf>  
or

go to [www.dpa.ca.gov](http://www.dpa.ca.gov) and click on the Office of Statewide Continuous Improvement under the Training and Continuous Improvement Division Subheading and click on Download the Art of Recognition to download the Portable Document Format (pdf) file.

A special **THANK YOU** to the collaborators of the "Art of Recognition" resource guide. The team included:

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